



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Lisa Richardson 213-361-6980

Email: lrichardson@bos.lacounty.gov

or

Contact: Sharita Moon, 213-309-4136

Email: smoon@bos.lacounty.gov

Media Advisory

More than 450 Freedom School Students to Gather for a Final Celebration

What: At 9 a.m., on Friday, August 2, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas will host more than 450 children ages 5 to 18 for the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools finale. Scholars, as these students are called, from six Freedom School locations in the Second District will sing, read and celebrate the end of a six-week summer literacy enrichment program called Freedom Schools. Aside from a yoga demonstration by Y.O.G.A. for Youth, students will enjoy face painting, a drumming workshop and interactive exhibits such as the Natural History's Museum's Seamobile.

When: Friday, August 2 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

****Opening Program: 9 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.****

Where: Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area
Lower Olympic Forest
4100 South La Cienega Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90056

Who: Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas, representatives from the County of Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles County Fire Department, the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum, the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, the Empowerment Congress Education Committee, the Music Center and Y.O.G.A. for Youth.

Background: Established in 1992 by Children's Defense Fund founder and children's advocate Marian Wright Edelman, Freedom Schools provide academically rigorous, quality summer and after school instruction to children. The program is guided by the belief that all children are capable of achieving high standards and is modeled on the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer Project, in which college students tutored at centers that served as an alternative to Mississippi's underfunded and segregated school system.

The Freedom Schools program is a free, six week summer literacy program that includes summer camp staples such as arts and crafts, field trips and recreational sports, but it also distinguishes itself by a heavy focus on reading instruction for students that may otherwise go all summer without brushing up on their academic skills. Students begin the morning with Harambee, a Swahili term that means "all pull together," during which time they read aloud, sing songs, recite motivational cheers, and then observe a moment of silence.

The 2013 Los Angeles County sites hosting Freedom Schools in the Second District this summer are: Agape International Spiritual Center in Culver City, First Community Development Corporation in Inglewood, Read Lead at Cal State Dominguez Hills and Helen Keller Elementary School, Community Coalition at the Crenshaw Christian Center and First New Christian Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles.

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